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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 001645

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SUBJECT: SUMMIT DELIVERABLES: RYABKOV NOTES SPEED AND  
SUBSTANCE OF U.S. RESPONSES, NEED FOR GOR COORDINATION

REF: STATE 61817

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Beyrle; reasons 1.4(b/d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov confirmed to Ambassador Steve Mull in a June 17 meeting in Moscow that the GOR is working hard to get responses to the "very creative hard work" delivered by Energy DepSec Poneman, A/S Gottemoeller and Ambassador Mull himself during recent meetings on statements on nuclear security and START follow-on, as well as agreements on JDEC, JTA, MCC and PDA. Ryabkov ventured that there might be a chance that the summit could launch work on joint threat assessments, but was quick to temper enthusiasm by reminding Ambassador Mull of long-standing Russian opposition to the establishment of a third U.S. MD site in Europe. Ambassador Mull pressed for agreement to announce agreement to conduct joint threat assessments and a date for experts meetings; Ryabkov said it might be possible to announce at the summit, but demurred on setting a date. Ryabkov conceded that the GOR owed the U.S. many responses and that time was running short. Both Ambassadors Mull and Beyrle argued that the substance and pace of engagement from Washington reflected a major effort to rebuild bilateral ties. End Summary.

Ryabkov: U.S. Has Done its Homework, GOR Now Must  
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¶2. (C) Ryabkov opened by praising the steps the U.S. had taken to address Russian questions and concerns with regard to a Joint Declaration on START follow-up, noting in particular the documents passed to the Russian side in advance of the June 15-16 Moscow visit of A/S Gottemoeller. Nonetheless, "differences must not be downgraded or disregarded," Ryabkov continued, especially those that pertain to "well-known Russian positions." Still, he anticipated that Russia would present its views on the revised Joint Statement text and other issues addressed in the non-paper, noting that these documents clearly reflected creative thinking and substantial inter-agency work in an extremely short time-frame.

¶3. (C) Turning to the Joint Data Exchange Center (JDEC) agreement, Ryabkov said that the GOR might have comments for the U.S. in the coming week. However, he cautioned, repeating previous statements, that the JDEC project should be viewed in the broader context of other pending matters between the U.S. and Russia.

¶4. (C) With regard to the Material Consolidation and Conversion (MCC) agreement, Ryabkov again lauded the revised text that emerged as a result of Deputy Energy Secretary Poneman's visit to Moscow the week of June 8. However, it was "too fresh" for him to have yet received any feedback from the GOR inter-agency, though he did promise comments "before

the weekend (June 19)." Likewise the revised text of the Joint Statement on Nuclear Security and the Plutonium Disposition Agreement Protocol (PDA) were being given expedited review, though coordination with RosAtom and other agencies added time to the process. The main issue remaining, as explained during the Poneman visit, concerns financing implementation of agreements - both from the U.S. and Russian sides, the latter involving a range of ministries, thus prolonging and complicating the process of putting together a consolidated response to U.S. ideas.

#### GOR Views on MD, Possible Joint Threat Assessment

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15. (C) Ambassador Mull noted the desire for a substantive presidential visit to Moscow, including agreement on significant deliverables. He acknowledged the concerns expressed by Ryabkov with regard to missile defense, bringing to his attention testimony delivered by Deputy Secretary of Defense Lynn and VCJCS Admiral Cartwright in recent days, especially their statements concerning the need to focus on theater, as opposed to strategic threats, posed by Iranian weapons programs. While no final decisions have been made regarding deployment of MD systems to the Czech Republic or Poland, the U.S. attaches great importance to proceeding with joint threat assessment discussions with Russia. As MDA's General O'Reilly outlined during previous Moscow consultations, the U.S. very much hopes Russia will agree to cooperate on (a) sharing data gathered by existing U.S. and Russian radar installations; (b) joint flight testing; and (c) research cooperation on lasers. He added that members of

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a U.S. joint threat assessment team would be prepared to come to Moscow "at a moment's notice" to engage with their Russian counterparts. Mull inquired whether Russia would be prepared to have both Presidents Obama and Medvedev announce during the July summit that the U.S. and Russia would move forward on this joint action.

16. (C) Ryabkov once again praised the breadth, depth and creativity of U.S. proposals on MD cooperation. He was compelled, he said, to remind the U.S. of a "conceptual discrepancy" in the positions of the two countries with regard to "sequencing" of cooperation. Russia's position that the question of establishment of a third site in Europe had to be resolved before missile defense cooperation with the U.S. could develop remained unchanged. Theater missile defense (TMD) cooperation was a separate matter, and Ryabkov took pains to note the progress made on that topic under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council.

17. (C) Saying he was speaking in a personal capacity, one that did not yet reflect instructions, Ryabkov called joint threat assessment an issue "ripe for consideration." He said it might well be possible that, in the near term, U.S. and Russian experts could meet to discuss the threat posed by Iran (though he discounted Iranian attempts to develop or acquire inter-continental missile capabilities, arguing it would be 15-20 years before Tehran might possess that level of missile know-how), which is connected to broader forms of cooperation, "possibly on MD itself," though any such threat assessment consultations would have to take place without prejudice to what form - if any - MD cooperation might take. Ryabkov was at pains to underline that, even if threat assessment discussions occurred, the matter of Russia's principled stance on the third European site would remain. He said he had not yet seen the Lynn and Cartwright testimony, but that he would review it. In this context, he noted FM Lavrov's unhappiness with the comments on MD cooperation with Russia made by Secretary of Defense Gates in recent testimony. Mull closed this area of discussion by pressing again for the two presidents to agree, and perhaps also announce, a meeting between U.S. and Russian threat assessment experts.

¶8. (C) On JDEC, Mull called for using the summit as an opportunity to, at a minimum continue, but perhaps deepen cooperation. He described a range of options available to the two presidents, acknowledging that time was running short: (1) The presidents could sign an agreement extending the terms of the current JDEC agreement for another 5 years, while agreeing to continue work on enhancing it; (2) In addition to a possible agreement on extension, the presidents could announce that the Joint Commission would meet in the near term; (3) Moving to bolder alternatives, if Russia were to offer additional sites, the U.S. would be ready to dispatch teams to assess security arrangements; (4) new arrangement for pre-launch notifications could be announced; and finally (5) mechanisms for exchanging pre-launch notifications could be defined. Ambassador Mull delivered to Ryabkov a non-paper (Reftel) providing further explanation of U.S. position on taxation and liability issues, which Ryabkov promised to study.

¶9. (C) Ryabkov appreciated the delineation of options from "minimal" to "ambitious," especially in light of time constraints before the summit. He said he could not comment on any of the ideas put forth, but that they would be examined carefully. Ambassador Beyrle added that the substantive proposals tabled by the U.S. side, and the quick turn around in responding to Russian comments, represented a serious effort on the part of the new administration to improve relations. U.S. START follow-on responses to Russian concerns had been turned around in only days, which will hopefully be reciprocated by equally constructive and timely responses from Russia at the next round of negotiations in Geneva next week. This hard work and speed was necessary to ensure that the summit is as rich and forward-looking as possible. However, for the future, the establishment of an inter-governmental commission would provide a framework for synchronizing the work of bureaucracies in both countries and working steadily on projects and issues.

Comment: The More Substance, the Better  
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¶10. (C) Ryabkov was clearly embarrassed that he did not have much concrete to present in response to Ambassador Mull's very meaty proposals. His positive words on a START follow-on declaration and possible announcement of joint threat assessment are welcome, but will require considerable interagency coordination in Russia, hence his hesitancy to commit. As he himself noted in closing, the willingness to find creative ways to accommodate Russian concerns has been noted by the GOR. But, in the end, purely Russian political considerations (domestic and foreign) on MD and a possible third site will influence how far President Medvedev (and PM Putin) will be willing to go toward publicly or privately agreeing to greater MD cooperation.

BEYRLE